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DE RUEHTU #0471 1070718
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 170718Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3017
INFO RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 1346

UNCLAS TUNIS 000471

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OES/STC (HART), NEA/MAG (HARRIS), NEA/PPD (FERNANDEZ, AGNEW)
AMMAN FOR ESTH (WHITTLESEY)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TSPL](#) [SENV](#) [KSCA](#) [KPAO](#) [TS](#)

SUBJECT: EMBASSY SCIENCE FELLOWS PROGRAM REQUEST

REF: A. STATE 30914

[1](#)B. TUNIS 453

[1](#)1. Embassy Tunis requests an Embassy Science Fellow from the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the field of engineering. The Science Fellow would identify potential partnerships between Tunisian and US educational and research institutions and participate in Embassy public outreach activities. The placement of a fellow would help to strengthen activities and collaboration under the bilateral Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement signed in 2004.

[1](#)2. The Government of Tunisia has expressed great enthusiasm for increasing educational and research partnerships and exchanges with the United States. By creating such partnerships, this project will have a lasting impact not only on collaborative research, but will also foster mutual understanding. Both the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Training and the Minister of Industry have recently emphasized that Tunisia's future economic success will depend on embracing technological advances and developing science and technology (Ref B). Tunisian institutions have focused particularly on engineering, especially in power and communications technology. Tunisia views itself as a leader in science and technology in Africa and is eager to play an international role. In June, Tunisia will host a World Federation of Engineering Organization conference for women in engineering.

[1](#)3. Post requests an NSF fellow with expertise in engineering, preferably power or environmental. The NSF has previously funded several successful collaborations between US and Tunisian universities and there is great potential for future cooperation. A Science Fellow from the NSF would work closely with the Ministry of Higher Education and institutions like the Cite des Sciences (Science City) to identify potential research and educational partnerships with US partner institutions. The Cite des Sciences hosts exhibitions and lectures and serves as a resource for Tunisian schools and universities. In the field of engineering, currently the Ecole Polytechnique, Tunisia's premier engineering university, is the only Tunisian institution to have partnerships with US universities. Ecole Polytechnique has partnerships with Virginia Tech and the University of Houston that involve student exchanges, joint research, and faculty workshops and seminars. The Cite des Sciences is a publicly-funded institute that aims to familiarize the Tunisian population with science and technology, making it a natural partner for the NSF.

[1](#)4. While in Tunisia, the Science Fellow will visit educational and research institutions throughout the country and will also have the opportunity to participate in Embassy public diplomacy efforts. US speakers with a scientific

background have been enthusiastically received by the Tunisian public. The Fellow may also give lectures and conduct workshops at the universities and institutions he/she visits.

15. French or Arabic language skills are preferable to facilitate outreach activities such as seminars and interviews, but are not required. English is increasingly being used as the language of instruction in engineering. The Embassy will provide housing and work space for the Fellow. The Public Affairs Section will provide logistical support. Post requests a timeframe of two months between November and February to coincide with the school year. As the assignment will be less than 60 days, the Fellow will not require a medical clearance. A security clearance is not required.

16. Embassy POC: Economic/ESTH Officer Victoria Taylor, Tel: 216-71-107-431, Fax: 216-71-107-090, E-mail: TaylorVJ@state.gov.
GODEC